

These minutes are subject to possible correction/revision at a subsequent Exeter  
Planning Board meeting

Exeter Planning Board

December 17, 2015

1. Ms. Bergeron called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices on the above date.
2. MEMBERS PRESENT: Landgon Plumer (Alt), Don Clement (BOS Rep), Pete Cameron (Clerk), Kelly Bergeron (Chair), Katherine Woolhouse (Vice Chair), Kathy Corson (Alt), Aaron Brown (arrived at 7:28 pm).

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah McGraw (Recording Secretary)

Ms. Bergeron stated that all members would be voting

**3. NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY – PB Case #21521**

**Continued public hearing on the application of Phillips Exeter Academy for a non-residential site plan review for the proposed construction of a 56,000 square foot “Center for Theater and Dance” building and associated site improvements on the southerly portion of the campus located along Court Street (northern end of the existing tennis courts). The subject property is located in the R-2, Single Family Residential zoning district. Tax Map Parcel #83-1. Case #21521.**

Roger Wakeman Chief of Planning Facilities with PEA discussed the project. Mr. Wakeman introduced the design and engineering team present; Mark Leighton with PEA, Jeff Clifford from Altus Engineering, John Skillern from Todd Williams Billie Tsien Architects, Steve Pernaw from Pernaw and Co, Kyle Zick from KZLA, as well as an Attorney Charles Tucker from Donahue, Tucker, Ciandella.

Mr. Wakeman recapped the context of the project and site planning. The Theater and Dance program is currently split between two buildings; Fisher Theater and Davis Building. The site for theater and dance would be relocated to Court Street where there are now tennis courts. PEA also took ownership of Gilman Street through a town vote. Mr. Wakeman showed a map of current conditions. The nearby Thompson Cage is proposed to be remodeled into the new field house. Gilman Street will be changed to a pedestrian walkway. A new entry way will be made to the Love Gym Complex. Mr. Wakeman showed renderings of the proposed project highlighting changes to be made. The focus for the Planning Board is to approve the site plan. Mr. Wakeman said that they did get Zoning Board approval. The plan is to start construction in April of 2016 with the building open for use in 2018. The applicant will be before the Planning Board for the new field house at a later date.

Jeff Clifford with Altus Engineering talked about changes made following comments from the Planning Board and Underwood Engineers. Mr. Clifford showed a map of the flood plain line and how it will change when the dam is gone. He presented maps of how traffic will flow through the entrances and the fire department was in agreement with their approach. Mr. Clifford said the snow storage areas were changed. There will be storm water treatment additions to the plan. The DPW asked to take away a crosswalk on Court Street which was changed in the plan. Some parking spots will be removed to accommodate the drop off area. Court Street would have curbing. There will be two 12 foot wide travel lanes and 4 foot shoulders as a gateway to the town. Ms. Corson inquired about bike lanes along Court Street which could discourage parking. Mr. Clifford said that this was possible but the town needs to incorporate connecting bike lanes for a complete route. Mr. Clifford said there will be two bike storage areas. DPW wanted a hydrant to come off Court Street. There has been a clean-up of the drainage plans. Impervious surface will be reduced by the addition of green space. The tennis courts to be lost by construction will be relocated. The number of outdoor courts will be reduced. 169 parking spots will be put below grade which will improve runoff. Storm water treatment will improve with this project. Rain gardens will be added to the green space for further storm water uptake from the two new buildings. The overall site will have a slight increase of impervious surface.

Kyle Zick, landscape architect with KZLA presented the landscaping plan. Mr. Zick said that the landscaping will be less formal and take inspiration from nature and the Little River. Deciduous and evergreen trees will be added to the landscape. Existing trees will be preserved to the extent possible. Concrete pavers and asphalt will be used for the walkways. The full plant list is included in the plan packet. Lighting will be similar to what is seen on campus.

Mr. Wakeman spoke about the November 23 site walk. After discussion about parking one option would be for entry and exit on Chadwick Lane instead of extending Marston Street. Safety and efficiency were main priorities for parking. Having a primary location for parking including a parking garage was an approach they wanted to take. There are 618 non residential PEA parking spaces proposed of which faculty will be assigned parking. An additional 70 parking spaces is planned. 353 spaces were the peak demand across campus. The proposed supply for parking is 344 parking spaces. 421 will be the peak parking demand after the Center for Theater and Dance and field house are complete. There will be a loss of 22 town parking spaces. There is a post development demand of 443 spaces. There is a memo with parking calculations included in the packet. Mr. Wakeman explained that PEA will be before the Planning Board again for the field house approval.

Steve Pernaw with Pernaw and Co. traffic engineers spoke about the proposed scope for the parking study. Following a question about an additional exit, they will be conducting the traffic study to include Marston Street. The company will be conducting traffic studies in January during school events to see what the demand is and analyze two modes of entering and exiting the parking area. They will be looking at a peak hour for Court Street traffic and a peak for event traffic. After a final

report, they will be looking for Planning Board input.

Mr. Clement commented that there is a morning peak at Court Street and asked if there is a way of studying this as well. Mr. Pernaw said that there is a NHDOT count station at this area which will be included in the report.

Mr. Wakeman said that the Applicant had submitted a condition of approval which says the Applicant will conduct a traffic study to inform the approval and discussion of the field house. Mr. Wakeman thanked the Planning Board for listening to their presentation and reiterated the benefits of this project to the campus.

#### BOARD COMMENT

Mr. Plumer said that Court Street is state Route 108 and asked if the Applicant would need permission to modify the street. Mr. Clifford said it is in the urban compact zone which the Town would have jurisdiction to work on and stated he is working with the town. Mr. Plumer commented that students may find a shorter path to the entrance of the building than what is currently in the plan. Mr. Clifford said they will take that into consideration and there is also a berm proposed to prohibit foot traffic off the path. Mr. Plumer asked if lighting will illuminate up the building or down. John Skillern from Todd Williams Billie Tsien Architects discussed the lighting plans. There will be lamp post lighting but they did not want to draw more attention to the building with lighting.

Mr. Clement asked about the parking calculations. Mr. Wakeman said there is a loss of parking in some areas with a net gain of 70 parking spaces. Mr. Clement asked about parking along the banks of the river. Mr. Wakeman replied that it will be new turf enforced parking. Mr. Clement also commented on the loss of 22 town public parking spaces without compensation to the town. Mr. Wakeman said that it is in the best interest of safety and will be subject to town approval. Mr. Clement asked if Court Street will be too narrow for truck traffic. Mr. Wakeman said that it is not changing the pattern or restricting traffic.

Mr. Cameron asked about an overpass for students to cross Court Street. Mr. Wakeman that they have not gone into a design about it but there is a possibility for infrastructure improvements to make the cross walks safer. Mr. Wakeman said that getting students to use the crossing areas is also challenging. Mr. Plumer asked if there will be additional signaling. Mr. Wakeman said there will be a pilot project for Front Street which would be presented to the Board of Selectman.

Mr. Brown said he appreciates the broad approach to the project. Ms. Corson said that the applicant informed the applicant that it may take time to teach people how to use the new parking situation.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chris Dione of 86 Court Street, Exeter said that the traffic on Court Street and Pine Street is very busy.

He asked to take into account Christ Church as an exit. Construction vehicles were also a concern and people parking in the neighborhoods close by. He noted a speed change of 45 mph to 25 mph as a matter of safety and pedestrian traffic around homes. Homeowners would be affected down Chadwick Street and suggested using Marston Street. Mr. Dione also asked to consider the carbon footprint of sending cars down and around the parking area.

Sarah James of 70 Court Street commented that there will be traffic coming and going near her house where it is now quiet. She thought that there would be a disturbance to her neighborhood. She asked if Marston Street would be gated or open.

Jeremy James of 70 Court Street asked about the parking if new parking would be permitted according to use.

Mr. Wakeman said that they are developing an operations plan for the parking garage and it is still under development. Control of the parking garage is still to be decided.

*Mr. Plumer moved to close the public hearing, second by Mr. Clement. **VOTE: Unanimous***

Mr. Cameron asked what the spaces on Court Street are used for. Mr. Plumer said that he thinks these spaces are used for events.

#### **Waiver Requests**

*Mr. Plumer moved to approve the waiver for section 12.1 performance maintenance guarantees, second by Ms. Woolhouse*

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

Langdon Plumer : Yay

Don Clement : Yay

Kelly Bergeron : Yay

Pete Cameron: Yay

Katherine Woolhouse : Yay

Aaron Brown: Yay

Kathy Corson : Yay

The motion was carried unanimously

Site Plan Approval

Conditions of Approval

- ***The following requests of the Planning Board to be addressed:***
  - ***Compliance with Fire Prevention Office recommendations resulting from the review currently in progress, with a letter of satisfactory compliance to be submitted with the final plan set.***
- ***All final revisions to the plans or related documents required by Town Departments, Town Counsel and their consultants to be addressed;***
- ***All appropriate fees to be paid including but not limited to: sewer/water connection fees, inspection fees, and other agreed upon improvements;***
- ***A detailed circulation/traffic parking plan for the entire south campus development will be submitted to the Planning Board in conjunction with the application of Site plan review for the Athletics Field House – upon which construction is anticipated to be completed prior to the completion of construction of the Center for Theater and Dance – which is the subject of this approval. Detailed studies by a traffic engineer will be submitted in support of the proposed circulation/traffic parking plan; and***
- ***All conditions of this approval are to be met within one year and all site improvements to be completed by December 2018.***

Mr. Clement commented on tying the new field house to the Center for Theater and Dance in the approval before them.

Ms. Bergeron said that the board is saying the Applicant will provide a parking plan

Attorney Charlie Tucker said that this is a conditional approval not a final approval.

Mr. Wakeman said that the proposed condition was because of Marston Street, to allow for a parking study. Ms. Corson said that she would like to see the flow of traffic.

***Mr. Plumer motioned to conditionally approve planning board case 21521 with the conditions as outlined, second by Mr. Cameron.***

**Roll Call Vote:**

*Langdon Plumer : Yay*

*Don Clement : Yay*

*Kelly Bergeron : Yay*

*Pete Cameron: Yay*

*Katherine Woolhouse : Yay*

*Aaron Brown: Yay*

Kathy Corson : Yay

***The motion was passed unanimously***

Ms. Bergeron asked if the applicant had been in contact with the Heritage Commission. Mr. Wakeman said that they plan to contact them.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes from November 19 2015 were tabled to the next meeting.

Minutes of November 5, 2015

***Mr. Cameron moved to accept the minutes of November 5, 2015 with corrections, second by Ms. Woolhouse.***

**Roll Call Vote:**

Langdon Plumer : Yay

Don Clement : Yay

Kelly Bergeron : Yay

Pete Cameron: Yay

Katherine Woolhouse : Yay

Aaron Brown: Yay

Kathy Corson : Yay

**4. OTHER BUSINESS**

Next meeting January 14, 2016.

*Mr. Cameron motioned to adjourn, second by Mr. Plumer. **VOTE: Unanimous***

The meeting was adjourned at 8: 50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Sarah McGraw, Recording Secretary